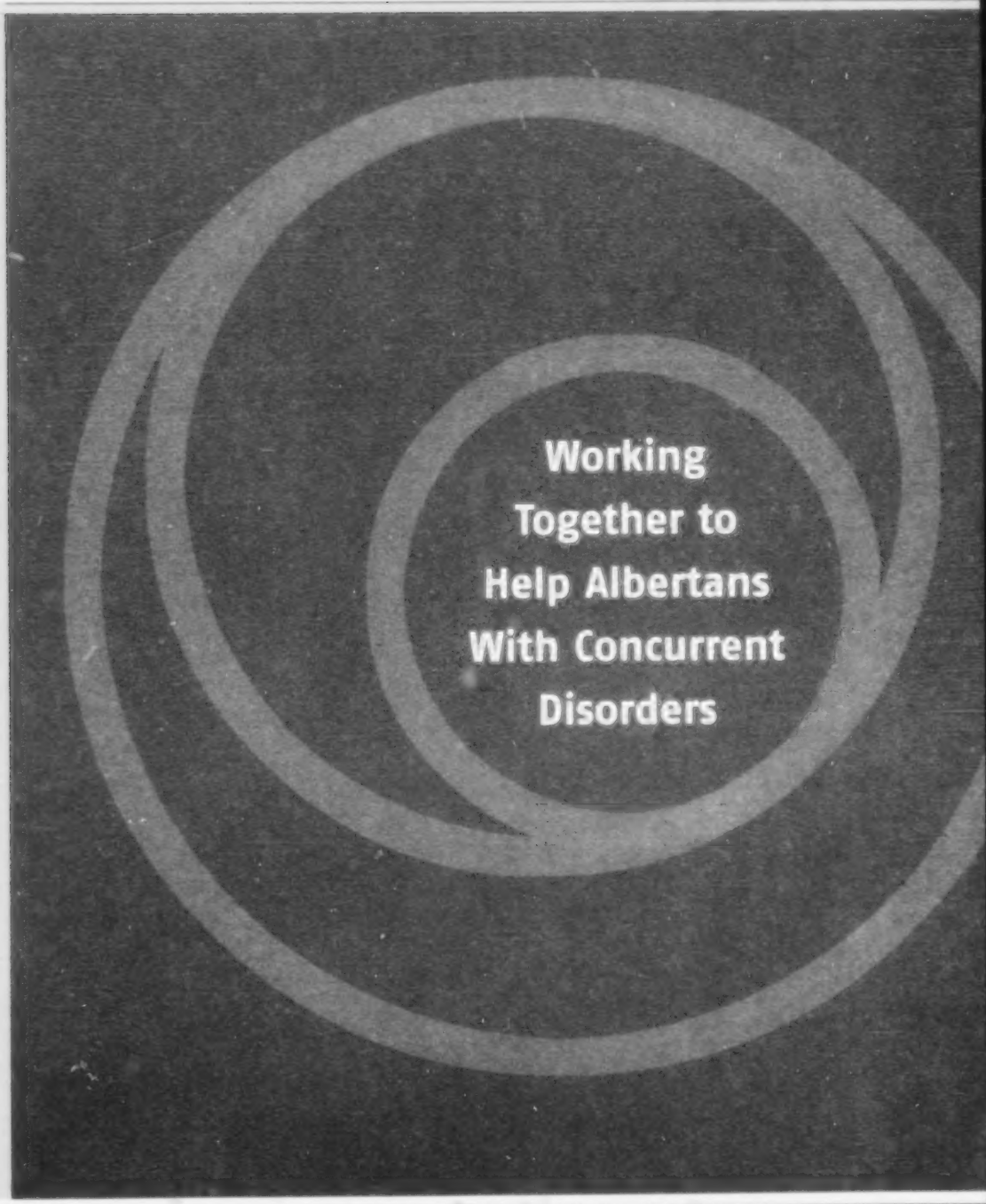
Working
Together to
Help Albertans
With Concurrent
Disorders

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Increasing Alberta's capacity to respond to the needs of people with concurrent addiction and mental health problems is one of the key strategies of Alberta's provincial mental health plan.* The plan stipulates that the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (AADAC) take the lead role in this strategy, working collaboratively with health regions and other major stakeholders. As AADAC embarks on this journey, it recognizes joint efforts already underway across the province.

Prevention and Information

Canadian Mental Health Week

AADAC Medicine Hat
Palliser Health Region Mental Health Services

These two groups work in conjunction during Canadian Mental Health Week to provide information and presentations to clients with concurrent disorders and their families and to the general public. They offer participants evidence-based information and testimonials from people belonging to dual diagnosis support groups.

A similar collaboration exists between the Canadian Mental Health Street Outreach & Stabilization Program (SOS) and AADAC Adult Counselling and Prevention Services in Calgary.

Positive Body Image Steering Committee

AADAC Peace River
Peace Country Health Region Mental Health Services, Public Health, and community members

These groups have worked together to provide ongoing services to youth, with information and support focused on building positive body image. The approach is client-centred and delivery is primarily in the classroom.

* Provincial Mental Health Planning Project. (2004). *Advancing the Mental Health Agenda: A Provincial Mental Health Plan for Alberta* (p. 46). Retrieved May 10, 2005, from http://www.amhb.ab.ca/publications/reports.asp

106-00021/

Treatment

AADAC collaborates with health regions to provide addictions treatment, consultation and referral.

Seniors Wellness Group

AADAC Adult Counselling and Prevention Services, Edmonton

Co-facilitated by a mental health nurse and an AADAC counsellor, this is a psychoeducational peer support group for people over the age of 60 who have both mental health and substance abuse concerns. The group provides a supportive environment for seniors to discuss health and social difficulties associated with substance abuse, gambling and mental health concerns. The group's format is based on Health Canada's suggested best practices and on current literature on seniors and addiction. The program is offered one afternoon weekly.

Concurrent Disorder Support Groups

AADAC Adult Counselling and Prevention Services, Edmonton
Capital Health Region, Alberta Mental Health Clinic, Edmonton

These psychoeducational peer support groups for people who have concurrent mental health and substance abuse concerns are co-facilitated by a mental health nurse and an AADAC counsellor. Participants receive information on mental health and addictions concerns, learn and practise new coping skills, and acquire a network that provides support outside of facilitated group time. Groups meet for half a day weekly at each site (AADAC and Mental Health). This collaborative approach allows for the simultaneous treatment of all disorders. Sessions are conducted in accordance with concurrent disorders literature and Health Canada's suggested best practices.

Similar services offered elsewhere in the province include groups in Lethbridge (Chinook Health Region) and Medicine Hat (Palliser Health Region), and an annual children's group in Slave Lake (Aspen Health Region) for youth aged 10 and older.

Noteworthy is the work of AADAC Brooks (Palliser Health Region) in this area with adolescent girls between the ages of 12 and 15. A focus on reducing high-risk behaviour is added to the goals of enhancing coping skills and providing information. AADAC Stettler has also established a strong working relationship with the local mental health office, which is part of the David Thompson Health Region.

Hospital-Based Collaboration

AADAC Adult Counselling and Prevention Services, Edmonton
Alberta Hospital, Edmonton

Capital Health Region, Royal Alexandra Stages of Change Group, Edmonton

The Stages of Change Group began in 2001. Clients with concurrent disorders are referred to the group by their psychiatric treatment team while they are inpatients in the hospital. Once discharged, they may continue with the group on an outpatient basis. The group usually includes about nine clients, and is co-facilitated by an AADAC addictions counsellor and a member of the hospital's psychiatric treatment team (typically an occupational therapist). The group operates twice weekly on Tuesday mornings (9:30 AM to 10:30 AM) and Thursday afternoons (2:30 PM to 3:45 PM).

Since the beginning of this partnership, the service has expanded to four half-days per week. In addition to co-facilitating the Stages of Change Group, the AADAC addictions counsellor provides consultation to hospital treatment staff and assessment and brief intervention services to psychiatric patients who have been identified as having co-occurring addiction and mental health problems.

AADAC Counselling and Prevention Services, Red Deer
Red Deer Regional Hospital
David Thompson Health Region

In Red Deer, three addictions counsellors from AADAC each spend one day per week in health region hospitals collaborating and consulting with professionals there. AADAC counsellors provide service to Red Deer Regional Hospital designated units as well as several Alberta Hospital Ponoka psychiatric units (including the dual diagnosis unit Bryce House).

AADAC Adult Counselling and Prevention Services, Calgary
Peter Lougheed Centre, Calgary
Calgary Health Region

In Calgary, an addictions counsellor from AADAC has been spending one day each week at the Peter Lougheed Centre working in the Short Stay Psychiatric Unit. Most addictions assessments are completed with patients/clients who have been admitted with mental health concerns. Following interviews, consultative input is provided to referring hospital staff. This five-year process has led to frequent requests for additional service and to numerous referrals to the Calgary AADAC clinic.

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AADAC staff
Local hospitals throughout Alberta

Groups in rural and urban sites throughout the province also work collaboratively with their local hospitals to provide services for people who have concurrent disorders. Some of these areas are Barrhead, Hinton, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, St. Paul, Elk Point, Smoky Lake, Two Hills, Swan Hills and Westlock.

Calgary Health Region
AADAC Youth Services, Calgary

These groups have enjoyed a close working relationship since 1992. Their joint effort is comprehensive and family centred. It includes weekly psychiatric assessments aimed at providing detailed treatment plans for adolescents who have concurrent disorders, and for their families. Treatment plans frequently include a combination of strategies integrating addiction and mental health approaches (for instance, individual and family counselling, pharmaceutical therapy, medical model approaches based on DSM-IV, day treatment, and group therapy).

AADAC Renfrew Recovery Centre (detoxification services)
Calgary Mobile Response Team

The Calgary Mobile Response Team attends Renfrew Recovery Centre as needed (generally once a week) to intervene with clients who are suicidal. The Calgary Mobile Response Team assesses the client; the client may then be admitted to a hospital, or may remain (conditionally) at Renfrew.

Across the province, there are a number of programs offering mobile service delivery.

David Thompson Health Region
AADAC Counselling and Prevention Services, Red Deer

David Thompson Health Region and AADAC Counselling and Prevention Services, Red Deer have collaborated to develop a treatment referral protocol.

AADAC Adult Counselling and Prevention Services, Edmonton
Edmonton-based psychiatrists

On a biweekly basis, AADAC Adult Counselling and Prevention Services, Edmonton acts as a case manager in conjunction with two Edmonton-based psychiatrists who work with clients who have concurrent disorders.

In April 2003, AADAC began a three-year provincial process to find ways to better meet the needs of Albertans with concurrent addiction and mental health problems. In 2004, Alberta's provincial mental health plan assigned AADAC the lead role, working with health regions and other key stakeholders, in developing a provincial strategy to address the needs of Albertans experiencing a concurrent addiction and mental health problem.

These are some key components:

- a task group to identify and meet organizational needs
- consultation with health regions, physicians and other key stakeholders
- piloting of a Concurrent Disorders Assessment Tool
- two-phase training for AADAC staff at both an introductory and advanced level
- development of a catalogue of concurrent disorders resources available throughout AADAC and the Alberta Government Library
- development of an information package including an AADAC Concurrent Disorders brochure, a counsellor toolbox module, and a residential treatment workshop

In addition, AADAC staff will present several sessions at AADAC's Professional Addictions Conference in June 2005. This three-day conference will be attended by over 500 participants and will feature Dr. Ken Minkoff, a renowned expert on concurrent disorders.

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Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission
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Collaborative Mobile Service Delivery

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Treatment Referral Protocols

David Thompson Health Region
AADAC Counselling and Prevention Services, Red Deer

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Case Management Collaboration

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Building Capacity Initiative

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